

## Isha L'Isha–Haifa Feminist Center

- ❑ Established in 1983, one of the first feminist centers in Israel
- ❑ Radical feminist ideology
- ❑ Organizational structure: No hierarchy
- ❑ Incubator of women's initiatives
- ❑ Representation of all women
- ❑ Non-governmental, supported by overseas women's funds



Isha L'Isha – Haifa  
Feminist Center

*Field Monitoring of Trafficking Victims in Israel:  
International Cooperation in Rehabilitation of  
Trafficking Survivors*

## Mission

- ❑ Promote cooperation between women's organizations
- ❑ Develop new, innovative projects to create solutions for the unmet needs of women
- ❑ Put women's issues on the public agenda



## Mission

- ❑ Inspire women to become leaders
- ❑ Promote solidarity among women
- ❑ Struggle for equal rights and opportunities for women
- ❑ Oppose all forms of violence against women



## The structure of our organization

- ◆ Horizontal organization with no hierarchy – no management and no manager
- ◆ Board and staff adhere to the “Quarter System” of Israeli feminist ideology
- ◆ Equal representation of Arab, *Mizrahi* (Eastern Jews), *Ashkenazi* (Western Jews) and lesbian women



## The structure of our organization

- ❑ Isha L'Isha is a non-profit organization run by a Collective that is open to all women
- ❑ The collective meets monthly and outlines the organization's policy and methods of action
- ❑ All decisions have to be unanimous: the whole collective has to agree



## NGO Influence on the Trafficking in Women Phenomenon in Israel

- 1997 – The Israeli Women’s Network issues the first report dealing with the trafficking phenomenon in Israel. The government ignores the issue
- The same year: beginning of Israeli NGO coalition initiative, with the aim of fighting against trafficking. The coalition consists of 15 human rights and women’s NGOs
- 1999 – Amnesty International publishes another report describing the phenomenon of trafficking in women. The government ignores the issue again
- 2000 – US publishes TIP report according to which Israel is in Tier three
- 2000 – Legislation of a new law against trafficking in persons for purposes of prostitution

## Organization’s Current Programmatic Priorities

- **Fighting Against Trafficking in Women**
- **Sustainable Economy Empowerment for Women**
- **Women, Peace and Security**
- **Women and Medical Technologies**

## Protection of Trafficking Victims in Israel

- February 2004 – following NGO and TIP pressure on the state by NGOs and TIP report, and by initial funding from the USA, a state shelter for trafficking victims was established
- Today trafficking victims are entitled to request a visa to stay in Israel for a year, which is defined as a rehabilitation year
- Victims are entitled for free legal aid in civil claims, and in submitting requests to receive a legal status in Israel
- While at the shelter, women receive social and medical aid
- The women are also provided assistance when they return to their source countries, in cooperation with NGOs in Eastern Europe who accompany their rehabilitation process in their countries

## NGO Influence on the Trafficking in Women Phenomenon in Israel

- 2000 – 2002 Establishing of various inter-ministerial committees to investigate data of trafficking in women phenomenon in Israel and to consolidate recommendations for action
- NGOs pressure inter-ministerial committees, their presence in discussions in the Knesset and in other governmental committees is defined as mandatory
- 2004 – Appointment of an inter-ministerial coordinator for the fight against trafficking in persons in Israel, by the Ministry of Justice – Advocate Rachel Gershuni
- October 2006 renewal of law against trafficking in persons which includes all aspects and a new phase in government’s position towards the phenomenon

## International Activity

- Since 2002, before opening the project, we consolidated an international network with NGOs from East European source countries
- Cooperation with international NGOs:
- Learning from the experience of each organization
  - Exchange of knowledge surveying the field and presenting current trafficking trends
  - Participation in project staff and volunteering in international working groups
  - Holding international seminars in cooperation with government officials for exchanging ideas and understanding processes on an international level
  - Rehabilitation of trafficking victims and assistance in a safe return to country of origin

## Working with Women, victims of the trafficking, Who are not in the Shelter

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| <p>The women:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>□ Isha L’Isha works with women, victims of the trafficking, who cannot get into the shelter for various reasons:</li><li>□ Mothers with children</li><li>□ Women who have been in Israel for a long time for humanitarian reasons, and have no place to return</li><li>□ Women who are not willing to live in any framework</li><li>□ Women who want to leave their traffickers or leave the sex industry</li></ul> | <p>The assistance we offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>□ Safe return to country of origin without deportation</li><li>□ Attempt to obtain a legal status in Israel</li><li>□ Field intervention and integration of women in different women’s organizations according to place of residence</li><li>□ Mediation with governmental legal aid authorities</li><li>□ Working with East European Consulates</li></ul> |
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## Information Flyer for Trafficking Victims



## NGOs We Work & Cooperate With



- **Source countries:**
- Russia:**  
IOM, Rape Crisis Center in St. Petersburg, "Angel" Coalition, WINROCK International
- Ukraine:**  
La Strada, IOM, local NGOs under the umbrella of IOM
- Belarus:**  
La Strada, IOM
- Moldova:**  
La Strada, IOM, Legal Assistance Center for Trafficking Victims
- Uzbekistan:**  
IOM, Avlod, Istiqbolli (the next generation)

Joining Forces to End Trafficking:  
A Multi-National Approach. International Seminar in Israel, March 2008

## Legal and Social Assistance to Women



Detention Center "Michal" in Hadera, June, 2004

- Visits to detention centers
- Initial psychological help
- Accompanying women in legal and civil procedures, to courts of law, and to investigations
- Distributions of flyers in sex-industry areas and in other public places: police, Ministry of Interior, etc.
- Locating deported women entitled to compensations—in Israel and abroad
- Helping in transferring the compensations to entitled women—in Israel and abroad
- Filing complaints against various authorities
- Advocacy work in the Knesset for purposes of influencing legislation and changing policies regarding the phenomenon of trafficking

## Publication – Flyer and Sticker with information of different ways to get help, including support in the process of fleeing brothels



## Current Trends in Trafficking in Women in Israel

- State struggle against organized crime brought about a significant decrease in trafficking foreign women into Israel, but simultaneously there is a sharp increase in pimping in Israeli women for purposes of prostitution
- There is trafficking in Israeli women to countries abroad, mostly Europe
- Public and state acknowledgement of state responsibility for criminalizing sex costumers
- Extensive experience among professionals in the various authorities contributes to deep understanding of the phenomenon and ways to deal with it

## Current Trends in Trafficking in Women in Israel

- Trafficking in older women
- Second and third-time trafficking in same women
- Trafficking victims in Israel not interested in returning to their countries of origin
- Traffickers becoming more sophisticated in their methods
- Trend in opening "private" apartments for purposes of prostitution
- Pimping for prostitution and trafficking from China – a new phenomenon, currently being monitored in the field



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***Thank you for your attention!***

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## Project Statistics



Joining Forces to End Trafficking:  
A Multi-National Approach. International  
Seminar in Israel, March 2008  
With our partners touring the sex industry  
area in Tel Aviv.

- Since May 2002, we assisted 1,600 women victims of trafficking – foreign and Israeli
- We held lectures and workshop on trafficking and prostitution to more than 6,000 participants – professionals and wider public
- We assisted about 500 women to completely leave the sex industry
- The project received praise from the state and different NGOs, emphasizing the project's effectiveness and significant contribution to changing policies and saving lives of women